

Amended
be detected either as they occur or during testing intervals. Once an error condition is detected, the monitoring device may initiate one or more corrective sequences to resolve the error condition or, alternatively, the monitoring device may notify a network operations center via a wireless network. Accessing a network operations center from an Internet-enabled remote device, a user may view status information for one or more field assets, issue commands to correct error conditions as well as perform other functions.

IN THE CLAIMS:


For the convenience of the Examiner, all pending claims of the present application are shown below in clean form whether or not an amendment has been made. Please refer to the attached sheet showing a marked-up version of the amendments to the claims.

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1. An apparatus for managing a field asset comprising:
at least one processor;
memory operably coupled to the at least one processor;
a communications interface operably coupled to the processor and the memory;
the communications interface operable to communicate with a controller board operably coupled to the field asset;
a program of instructions storable in the memory and executable in the processor;
the program of instructions operable to correct at least one field asset error condition and further operable to package uncorrected error conditions for transmission;
a wireless network interface operably coupled to the memory and the processor; and
the wireless network interface operable to transmit the packaged error conditions to a network operations center via a wireless network.

2. The apparatus of Claim 1 further comprising the program of instructions operable to poll the controller board to determine whether an error condition exists on the field asset.

3. The apparatus of Claim 1 further comprising:
the wireless network interface operable to receive commands from the network operations center transmitted via the wireless network; and
the commands operable to correct at least one uncorrected error condition on the field asset.

4. The apparatus of Claim 1 further comprising the field asset including hardware operable to perform ice bagging and vending operations.



5. The apparatus of Claim 1 further comprising:
the wireless network interface operable to receive at least one command from an Internet-enabled remote device; and
the at least one command operable to correct at least one uncorrected error condition existing on the field asset.

6. The apparatus of Claim 1 further comprising:
at least one sensor operably coupled to the memory and the processor; and
the at least one sensor operable to evaluate at least one characteristic of the field asset.

7. A system for the Internet enabled management of a field asset comprising:
a field asset having a controller board operable to detect at least one error condition present on the field asset;
a monitoring device operably coupled to the field asset;
the monitoring device including a processor, memory operably coupled to the processor, a communications interface operably coupled to the processor, the memory and the controller board and a wireless network interface operably coupled to the memory and the processor;
the communications interface operable to communicate with the field asset and the wireless network interface operable to communicate with a wireless network;
a network operations center operably coupled to the wireless network; and

the network operations center operable to receive alerts indicative of error conditions existing on the field asset from the monitoring device and the network operations center further operable to display at least one entry indicative of an error condition existing on the field asset on an Internet-enabled remote device.

8. The system of Claim 7 further comprising the network operations center operable to communicate one or more control functions to the field asset in response to selection by a user from the remote device.

9. (NEW) The system of Claim 7 further comprising:
the monitoring device including a program of instructions storable in the memory and executable in the processor; and
the program of instructions operable to initiate a sequence of instructions designed to correct at least one error condition present on the field asset.

10. (NEW) The system of Claim 9 further comprising the program of instructions operable to package uncorrected error conditions for transmission to the network operations center over the wireless network.

11. (NEW) The system of Claim 9 further comprising the program of instructions operable to poll the field asset to determine whether an error condition is present on the field asset.

12. (NEW) The system of Claim 9 further comprising:
the program of instructions operable to evaluate whether the sequence of instructions designed to correct the at least one error condition was effective; and
the program of instructions further operable to repeat the sequence of instructions designed to correct at least one error condition in response to a remaining error condition.

13. (NEW) A method for monitoring the operating status of a field asset comprising:

coupling at least one monitoring device to a controller board of the field asset;
determining, by the monitoring device, whether at least one error condition is present on the field asset;

identifying whether an error condition present on the field asset is correctable by the monitoring device;

initiating a correction sequence, to be performed by the monitoring device, designed to correct at least one error condition identified as correctable by the monitoring device;

evaluating, by the monitoring device, whether the correction sequence was effective;
packaging uncorrected error conditions for transmission by the monitoring device;

and

transmitting the packaged error conditions to at least one destination over a wireless network.

14. (NEW) The method of Claim 13 further comprising repeating the steps of initiating and evaluating a predetermined number of times.

15. (NEW) The method of Claim 13 further comprising polling, by the monitoring device, the field asset to determine whether at least one error condition is present on the field asset.

16. (NEW) The method of Claim 13 further comprising:
receiving, at a network operations center, the packaged and transmitted error conditions; and
updating an Internet accessible database such that a technician can review at least one field asset for the presence of error conditions.

17. (NEW) The method of Claim 16 further comprising notifying the technician of the error condition on the field asset.

18. (NEW) The method of Claim 13 further comprising sending a message indicative of the error condition to an Internet-enabled remote device for display.